

## Poetry.

### LOST—THE SUMMER.

Where has the summer gone?  
 She was here just a minute ago,  
 With roses and daisies  
 To whisper her praises—  
 And every one loved her so!

Has any one seen her about?  
 She must have gone off in the night!  
 And she took the best flowers  
 And the happiest hours,  
 And asked no one's leave for her flight.

Have you noticed her steps in the grass?  
 The garden looks red where she went;  
 By the side of the hedge  
 There's a golden rod edge,  
 And the rose vines are withered and bent.

Don't you fear she is sorry she went?  
 It seems but a minute since may!  
 I'm scarcely half through  
 What I wanted to do;  
 If she only had waited a day!

Do you think she will ever come back?  
 I shall watch every day at the gate  
 For the robins and clover,  
 Saying over and over:  
 "I know she will come back, if I wait!"

—R. M. Alden.

## Contributions.

### BOYS BRIGADES.

J. C. CASSEL.

"The propriety of organizing Boys Brigades in connection with Brethren Sunday-schools" is the topic assigned to me to consider.

Upon that question I hold very radical views, so much so that I can see no propriety at all in having such organizations in connection with our churches or Sunday-schools.

In physical things the mixing of adverse, or diverse properties, or qualities often bring about a happy medium; for instance extreme heat and extreme cold brought together will produce a comfortable temperature. Very sweet things and sour substances mixed together will produce an agreeable result. I remember when a boy my mother used to make what we called "vinegar soup;" it was made of bread, water, vinegar and molasses or sugar. When proper proportions of each were used it made a very palatable dish on a hot summer's day. In chemistry the mixing of opposite properties of ten results in useful compositions, but I do not believe that this law in the natural world holds good in the spiritual realm. I suppose Prof. Drummond would say it did, but I must beg to differ with him. I do not believe that any one can get too much real true spirituality, and any attempt to modify, to reduce, to neutralize it cannot help but result in great loss in power,

grace and wisdom. The highest, the intensest spirituality we can attain to is none too strong to maintain a high standard of religious life. We should therefore discourage, discountenance, reject all measures, institutions or organizations in our churches, or Sunday-schools that savor of worldliness or carnality. I believe that the Boys Brigade is in more than one way such an institution.

In the first place what bearing has military drill on true religion? How can it be made a means of grace when the fundamental idea of it is to destroy, to kill, to take vengeance, principles diametrically opposed to both the primary, and ultimate objects of religion. How can the principle of love be instilled by military tactics? Is there anything more incompatible than the spirit and object of a military organization and the definition the Apostle James gives to religion? He says "True religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the widows and fatherless in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." If the military organization is used for the purpose it is instituted it makes widows, and fatherless ones, it afflicts rather than soothes sorrow; it is an institution of the world pure and simple and no one that belongs to a military organization can be unspotted from the world. There is no escape from this conclusion. The claim may be made that we must have military organizations as a means of protection, and defense, no doubt the world needs them but let the worldly constitute them; the saints of God never.

I am however well aware that those Boys Brigades are not really military organizations, but they instill those principles, which are antagonistic to the teachings of our blessed Master. Under the law where retaliation was an established principle, where one could demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot, in short demand reparation for every wrong the spirit of revenge, or even aggressive warfare was all right; but under a dispensation where *love* and *charity* is to prevail, where one is to pray for his enemy, and those who despitefully use us, to love his neighbor as himself there everything of a revengeful, cruel, carnal tendency must be avoided. Give a boy a musket, or a stick of wood to represent a musket, and drill him in the art and science of killing his fellowmen, and you fill his soul with ideas contrary to everything that we ought to teach in our Sunday-schools. Such training may make patriots but not Christians. It is the church's business to

make Christians whether they become patriots in a worldly sense or not.

If we sincerely use the Lord's prayer, we have no use for the knowledge of the arts of warfare; if we forgive others their sins, we will not want to shoot at them, or kill them, and *forgive* we must if we want to be *forgiven*. It would be an irreconcilable spectacle to me to see two contending armies both praying the prayer that Christ gave to his disciples and then commence to shoot each other down.

It is however not my purpose to denounce military organizations any more than any other purely worldly institutions. They are a necessity to sustain the arm of the law, but it is not a part of the business of our churches, or Sunday-schools to train our boys in arts and sciences diametrically opposed to our holy religion. Christians are a peculiar people, zealous of good works, transformed by the renewal of their minds, having given their bodies a living sacrifice unto God, which is their reasonable service, hence cannot consistently train their children to be otherwise. Every effort in our Sunday-schools must be directed toward the implanting of the principles laid down by our blessed Master.

I am aware of the difficulty of interesting and holding our boys together in our Sunday-schools. Our experience is like the little girl's that used to keep a Sunday-school with her "dolly," her tabby, and a pet calf. One day she was very sorrowful, and when her mother asked her what the trouble was, she replied that the dolly, and Tabby were all right, but the calf had got too big to go to Sunday-school. That is the trouble with our boys, but many of them are not too big to go to prison, to houses of refuge and to reformatories.

Rather than instil wrong ideas in our Sunday-schools I should prefer to instil none at all, and thus leave the minds of our boys open to conviction to the truth in later years. What we teach them in early life they will retain largely through their after years. It is better to hold up the story of the Cross at all hazards than to substitute something else simply to entertain; one word of *truth* planted in the heart will do more good than a whole year of training in a Boys Brigade. If Christians were Christians indeed; if they had daily readings of the Bible in their homes; prayer and songs of praise morning and evening at the family altar; and if our souls were all baptized with the Holy Ghost as they should be, there would be no occasion for Boys Brigades. The trouble is not so much with the boys as with the parents. Let us not try to atone for our short comings